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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 11 May 1992, at 11.25 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDOS (Hungary)

- Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session
- Other business
- Concluding statements

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The meeting was called to order at 11.25 a.m.

REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: After three weeks of hard work, the Disarmament Commission is now approaching the final stage of its current session. In accordance with our programme of work, we shall take up agenda item 8 regarding the consideration and adoption of the reports of subsidiary bodies on the various substantive items and the draft report of the Commission to the General Assembly. Those reports are contained in documents A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2 to 6.

In accordance with the agreed programme of work we shall first adopt the report of the Commission as a whole and then hear concluding statements by delegations.

I intend to start with the consideration and adoption of the reports of the Commission's various subsidiary bodies on individual agenda items. I shall call on the Chairman of each Working Group in turn to introduce the report of his Working Group to the Commission.

We begin with the report of Working Group I, on agenda item 4 regarding objective information on military matters (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.3). I call on the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden, to introduce the report of the Group.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden), Chairman of Working Group I: I have the honour to introduce the report of Working Group I, on agenda item 4, entitled "Objective information on military matters". The report is contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.3.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Chairman, Working Group I)

Working Group I held 17 meetings between 22 April and 11 May 1992. Furthermore, I, as Chairman, conducted informal open-ended and private consultations during that period in order to promote agreement on the issues under deliberation in the Working Group.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Chairman, Working Group I)

At its first meeting, on 22 April, the Working Group agreed to take the 1991 Chairman's suggested text on guidelines for objective information on military matters as the basis for its work. That text was thereafter thoroughly discussed, and numerous proposals for amendments, deletions and additions were made. As a result, the text was reformulated to a very considerable extent.

It is a source of satisfaction for me to be in the position to report to the Commission that on 8 May the Working Group reached consensus on the guidelines and recommendations contained in the annex to the report.

The deliberations of the Working Group have taken place in a very positive atmosphere. I was privileged, as Chairman, to enjoy the cooperation of all delegations. The discussions were sometimes complicated and time-consuming, but it proved possible to find common ground on all the issues that were raised in the course of our work.

I have already had the opportunity to express my thanks to all delegations, to the members of the Secretariat and to my collaborators for the cooperation and support they extended to me during these weeks. May I, on this occasion, express my thanks also to you, Mr. Chairman, for your valuable support and for your own contribution to our work as Chairman of the Working Group last year. My thanks also go to its previous Chairman, Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria, for laying the basis for our work in its initial stage two years ago.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Working Group Chairmen for their understanding and cooperation in agreeing to allocate extra time to Working Group I in order to make it possible for it to complete its work in a successful manner.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Chairman, Working Group I)

At its 17th meeting, on 11 May, Working Group I adopted its report by consensus. I have the honour hereby to submit the report to the Disarmament Commission for its consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.3) of Working Group I on agenda item 4 regarding objective information on military matters.

The report was adopted.

Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan): I should like to convey my delegation's deep appreciation to Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden for the excellent manner in which he guided the work of Working Group I on objective information on military matters.

While my delegation, in a spirit of compromise and constructive cooperation, joined the consensus in the adoption of the report on guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, we should like to place on record the following:

In the text which has just been adopted by consensus under the section dealing with "Principles", the chapeau paragraph states that Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter are particularly relevant to the provision of objective information on military matters. However, we would have preferred to see Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter listed in the text, owing to their special importance to the subject, which cannot be overemphasized, particularly the peaceful settlement of disputes and the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination.

Pakistan fully supports the concept of transparency in armaments, as long as, in our view, it simultaneously and comprehensively takes into account all

(Mr. Mahmood, Pakistan)

its related and integrally linked aspects, particularly the indigenous production capabilities of different States, as well as the legitimate security concerns of States, and helps in enhancing confidence-building between States, particularly at the regional level, with the ultimate objective of ensuring the equal and undiminished security of States at the lowest level of armaments.

The accumulation of armaments in various regions of the world is a result of a number of factors: unresolved territorial disputes, denial of the right to self-determination, ambitions of regional hegemony by States possessing military superiority and foreign occupation and military intervention.

Therefore, one of the most important issues to be addressed by the international community is the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts and disputes. Only thus will proposals for the provision of objective information on military matters and transparency in armaments succeed in their essential objective, and the process of regional and international peace and security be strengthened.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the report of Working Group II on agenda item 5, entitled "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons", as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.4.

I call on the representative of India, to introduce the report of Working Group II on behalf of its Chairman, Ambassador Prakash Shah.

Mr. JAIN (India): It is my privilege, on behalf of His Excellency Ambassador Prakash Shah, Chairman of Working Group II, to introduce the report of the Group on its consideration of agenda item 5, entitled "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons". The report is contained in conference room paper A/CN.10/1992/CRP.4.

The Working Group held nine meetings. In carrying out its deliberations the Group had before it a number of working papers submitted by various delegations and documents as listed in paragraph 2 of the report.

As the Chairman mentioned in his first progress report to a plenary meeting of the Commission, the Group decided, at its second meeting, to base its work on the four subjects which had been agreed to at its previous session in 1991. Thereafter, the Group proceeded to discuss those four subjects; a core working group was charged with elaborating the third one. The Chairman has asked me to express his appreciation to the delegation of Egypt for discharging the responsibility of coordinating the core group's deliberations in an efficient and businesslike manner.

The debate on the four subjects was constructive and engendered much demonstrated interest. During the course of the discussions, the four subjects were further elaborated by the Group. The changed international climate provided the Group with a new setting to exchange views and perceptions on a wide variety of issues under the agenda item. Even though a divergence of views on major substantive issues continues, the focus on specific issues provides useful groundwork for the Group to aim at concluding its work successfully next year.

(Mr. Jain, India)

The elaboration of the four subjects has helped in identifying some aspects on which the Group may wish to focus in the future. The Working Group believes that the progress made during this year's session in identifying and elaborating the various interrelated elements under the four subjects should enable it, at next year's session, to work towards consensus-building to be reflected in its final report. The large number of working papers presented and statements made during the session not only reflect the high interest of member States in the subject of nuclear disarmament but should also contribute greatly to the Group's deliberations to continue next year.

The elaboration, which is annexed to the report of the Group, is not exhaustive. As the report itself underlines, the elaboration is without prejudice to the right of any delegation to address items which do not appear on it; its sequence is not reflective of priorities; and it does not prejudice the position of any delegation.

The Chairman believes that the discussion on this item has proved that nuclear disarmament remains the agreed highest priority for international peace and security. He commends the report for adoption by the Commission by consensus.

Ambassador Shah would like to express his deep appreciation to all delegations for their efforts, support and cooperation, both in informal consultations and in formal meetings, on this challenging subject. He expresses in particular his sincere thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, for your unreserved and sustained support of him in his work and to His Excellency, Mr. Amr Moussa, Foreign Minister of Egypt, for his stewardship of the Working Group last year, which laid the foundation for the significant progress achieved this year. Ambassador Shah further wishes to express his gratitude

(Mr. Jain, India)

to the Secretary of the Working Group, Ms. Jenifer Mackby, for her most valuable assistance, and to the interpreters and all other Secretariat staff who efficiently serviced our meetings.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no comments, may I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.4) of Working Group II on agenda item 5 regarding nuclear disarmament?

The report was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the report of Working Group III on agenda item 6, entitled "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.5.

I call on the representative of Peru, to introduce the report of Working Group III on behalf of its Chairman, Ambassador Ricardo Luna.

Mr. PAULINICH (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the Chairman of Working Group III, Ambassador Ricardo Luna, I am pleased to introduce the report of the Group on agenda item 6, entitled "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", contained in conference room paper A/CN.10/1992/CRP.5.

Working Group III held nine meetings between 22 April and 8 May. It also met once for informal consultations during that time. The Group exhaustively considered the first two topics of the document prepared by Ambassador Wisnumurti last year, in other words, "Relationship between regional disarmament and global security and arms limitation and disarmament", and "Principles and guidelines".

As a result of the consideration of these first two topics, the Chairman submitted two papers containing the status of the deliberations that were carried out and including a series of proposals put forward by various

(Mr. Paulinich, Peru)

delegations, which improved or updated the principles relevant to these two sections, as well as the formulation of new principles that have enriched the subject's consideration. Provisional agreements have been reached on most of the principles, and these will again be considered at the next session.

My delegation considers that important progress has been made since last year, on the understanding that the papers submitted by the Chairman include, as has already been mentioned, provisional agreements which should constitute the basis of next year's consideration.

My delegation would like to express its sincere appreciation for the active participation and spirit of cooperation of the delegations that attended the Group's deliberations. We also thank the Secretariat for its efforts in support of our work.

Lastly, my delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the outstanding manner in which you have been conducting our work at this session.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments at this stage, I should like to take up the various amendments to this report that were indicated in the course of our previous discussions, without specifically mentioning them. I shall just indicate the places where these amendments should be inserted in the final text. In annex II of document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.5, we have amendments in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 25.

If there is no comment, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report of Working Group III contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.5, as amended.

Mr. JAIN (India): With due regard - and I hope I am not quibbling about words, Mr. Chairman - when we come to adopting the report, could we not say we are adopting the report as "orally corrected", and not "as amended"? I think that is actually the case.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no difficulty in responding positively to the request of the representative of India. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.5) of Working Group III on agenda item 6, "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", as orally corrected.

The report, as orally corrected, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the report of Working Group IV on item 7, entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields", as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.6.

I call on the representative of Nigeria, to introduce the report of Working Group IV on behalf of Ambassador Azikiwe.

Mr. FASEHUN (Nigeria): It is my privilege to introduce the report of Working Group IV on behalf of Ambassador Azikiwe.

Working Group IV was mandated to consider agenda item 7, entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields". The report is in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.6. The Working Group held 10 meetings. Informal consultations were held under the guidance of Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada.

The report contains 8 paragraphs. Paragraphs 1 to 4 describe the procedure of the Working Group, including the election of officers, and the papers submitted, of which there were 13 in all. Paragraphs 5 to 8 contain the views of member States on the sub-items; scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security; science and technology for disarmament; the role of science and technology in other related fields; and the transfer of high technology with military applications. The debate in the Working Group was rich and diverse, indicative of progress, albeit small, on the discussion of the various sub-items. At its 10th meeting, Working Group IV adopted its report.

I wish to express the gratitude of Ambassador Azikiwe to Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada for her commendable role in presiding over the informal consultations. Nigeria also wishes to thank you, Mr. Chairman,

(Mr. Fasehun, Nigeria)

for your support and understanding. We also thank members of Secretariat for their cooperation and tireless service.

The report of Working Group IV is hereby submitted for consideration and approval.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like at this stage to indicate the amendments to be introduced into the text of the report.

At the bottom of page 1, under subparagraph (m), there is a modification to be made. On page 2, in paragraph 4, we have a change to be introduced. In the third subparagraph of paragraph 5, there is a change in the text, and in the fourth subparagraph, on page 3, we also have a slight change to be introduced. In paragraph 6, there is a change. In the third subparagraph of paragraph 8, on page 4, we have an amendment to introduce. On page 5, in the last subparagraph of paragraph 8, there were two proposals for amendments, which were accepted. There was also a general comment as regards the various working papers that were submitted, and this comment will also have to be reflected throughout the document. The Secretariat will take care of it.

If there are no comments, we can now proceed to the adoption of the report (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.6) of Working Group IV on item 7 regarding the role of science and technology in the field of disarmament. May I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report, as orally corrected?

The report, as orally corrected, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now adopted the reports of the four subsidiary bodies of the Disarmament Commission. I should like to express, on behalf of the Bureau and the Secretariat, our thanks and appreciation to the Chairmen of the Working Groups for their endeavours in dealing with their tasks, for their dedication to the subjects, and for their cooperation in

(The Chairman)

successfully carrying out the tasks entrusted to the Commission by the General Assembly.

We are now in a position to take up the draft report of the Disarmament Commission for consideration, as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2.

I have the pleasure to call on the Rapporteur of the Commission, Mr. Bob Hiensch of the Netherlands, to introduce the draft report.

Mr. HIENSCH (Netherlands), Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission: It is my honour and pleasure to introduce to the Disarmament Commission the draft report of the Commission on its current session, as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2, which is before members of the Commission for consideration.

In conformity with previous practice, the draft report contains four chapters: Introduction, Organization and work of the 1992 session, Documentation, and Conclusions and recommendations. As in previous years, the document presents a factual description of the Commission's work during this session. With regard to the substantive work done by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the relevant sections will contain the reports of the four Working Groups, which have just been adopted by the Commission.

As members may note, certain information has been left blank in the draft report at this stage. I propose that we leave it to the Secretariat to complete the text with meeting numbers and dates as appropriate.

At this point, the Secretariat has left me, in the Rapporteur's brief, exactly two lines for a personal assessment. I do not know whether it is within the tasks or competence of the Rapporteur to give an assessment of the Disarmament Commission's work, but I should like nevertheless to take the opportunity afforded to me. However, in view of the number of delegations

(Mr. Hiensch, Rapporteur, Disarmament Commission)

inscribed on the speaker's list, I shall be very brief and restrict myself to those two lines.

This session of the Disarmament Commission has in general been a successful one. There has been not only the positive conclusion of one agenda item, but also good progress on another one. On the other hand, there was a mixed result on other items on the agenda, which fell somewhat below my expectations. This means that, at next year's session of the Disarmament Commission, much work will remain to be done with the finalization of two, or even three, agenda items. In this respect, it is my impression that the experience of holding consecutive meetings was a positive one, and it could be continued next year.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Secretariat for the assistance and cooperation they provided to me in the preparation of the draft report of the Commission. In particular, I should like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Davinic, Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, I wish to offer sincere thanks to Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, Secretary of the Commission, and his colleagues for their valuable assistance and cooperation.

Moreover, Mr. Chairman, I should like to emphasize that it was a great honour and privilege for me to have served under your distinctive and effective leadership, and to have received the fullest cooperation of the Chairmen of the four Working Groups, who so ably guided the deliberations of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission during this session.

With this brief introduction, I now recommend that the Commission adopt the draft report.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now consider the draft report (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2) of the Commission paragraph by paragraph. This is something of a ritual, and I ask members' indulgence.

Since there were no comments on paragraphs 1 to 14, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 1 to 14 were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments on paragraph 15?

Mr. JAIN (India): Part III B of the draft report, paragraphs 15 to 24, refers to a purported list of the documents dealing with substantive questions that were submitted in the course of the Commission's work.

I do not know if this is a matter of practice, but I think the substantive aspect of the issue should be more important. There are a number of working papers dealing with substantive issues that were presented in the Working Groups during the session, and these are indeed listed in the reports of the Working Groups. But they are not listed here in paragraphs 16 to 24. Since the language of paragraph 15 does not even refer to those documents, I think it would be only appropriate to refrain from any unintended discrimination by implying that the paragraphs following paragraph 15 contain a comprehensive list of all the documents submitted during this year's session.

Working Groups are an integral part of the Disarmament Commission, so I do not think it is really necessary to make a distinction in the report between the papers submitted to the Commission itself and those submitted to the Working Groups.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Commission.

Mr. LIN Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Disarmament Commission): In response to the question raised by the representative of India, I wish to point out that the wording of paragraph 15 is the same as that adopted in previous years and accords precisely with previous practice.

In connection with the various documents listed, delegations will understand that all the documents submitted to a subsidiary body for the purpose of the work of that body are already listed in the report of that subsidiary body. Thus, all those documents will be duly reflected in the Commission's report. In Part III B, only documents submitted at the level of the Commission - those bearing an "A/CN.10" symbol - are listed. That is the general practice with regard to the report of the Commission.

Mr. JAIN (India): Mr. Lin indeed, has just kindly confirmed what I thought was the case: that this is a matter of practice.

The beginning part of paragraph 15 reads "In the course of the Commission's work...". That clearly implies that the Commission's work also includes the work of the Working Groups. The point is that we are making an unintended distinction between papers on substantive issues submitted to the Disarmament Commission itself and those submitted in the Working Groups. I hope it will be possible for the Commission to make the list more comprehensive and include all the documents in this Part, because those other documents too dealt with substantive questions and were submitted in the course of the Commission's work.

The CHAIRMAN: As we have heard, this is the practice we have followed thus far. Obviously, the Commission is master of its own proceedings, and if it wishes it can introduce any kind of change. We have simply to see whether or not we are willing to move in that direction. I

(The Chairman)

would obviously very much like to consult the Commission: shall we leave the text as it is, reflecting the practice of the last couple of years, or do we feel we are in a position to redraft a sentence? I am entirely in the hands of the Commission.

Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan): I would like clarification on one point. To what are we referring when we say "all the documents"? Are we referring to statements? Are we referring to informal papers?

The CHAIRMAN: Let me ask the representative of Pakistan where in the report he finds the words "all the documents"?

Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan): I was just responding to the statement made by the previous speaker; it is merely a point of clarification.

Mr. STEFANINI (France) (interpretation from French): I do not think the Commission should spend too much time on this matter; it is essentially an editorial matter. In the view of my delegation, the report should mention only documents formally submitted as documents of the Commission or of a Working Group, translated into all official languages and bearing the "A/CN.10" symbol; other papers that have been circulated should not be mentioned here.

We might base the wording of paragraph 15 on the French version, which is clearer than the English. It reads, "In the course of its work, the Commission had before it the following substantive documents," the Commission comprising, of course, the Commission itself meeting in plenary and all its Working Groups.

(Mr. Stefanini, France)

Hence I think the English version of paragraph 15 could be rewritten to say something like

(spoke in English)

"In the course of its work the documents listed below, dealing with substantive questions, were submitted to the Commission".

(spoke in French)

This would preserve the concept of the Commission and its working Groups. But as I am no Anglophone, I leave this to the discretion of the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Frankly, I am not very enthusiastic about reopening a discussion on this sentence. We have the reports of the subsidiary working bodies and they mention the very many papers that were presented to the Working Groups. This morning we even expanded this listing because some members found that not all of them had been included in it, and so we now have another listing of the documents that were submitted to the Commission.

If we take the Disarmament Commission's report to the General Assembly as a whole - and that is the only way we can take it; there is no other way - we have every document that was presented to the Working Groups and to the Commission itself in a single comprehensive document. So, actually, we are not leaving out anything because, I repeat, the report has to be considered in its entirety and cannot be separated from its annexes and various other parts.

In this spirit, I am asking members whether we really are not in a position to accept the language in paragraph 15, with the clear understanding that conference room paper A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2 will include the texts of conference room papers A/CN.10/1992/CRP.3, 4, 5 and 6, thus constituting one single document.

I think that is a very logical approach which might gain us some time. I am referring to the list of speakers, which already contains 14 names. We are all interested in finishing the work of the Disarmament Commission today, after the hard work of the last three weeks.

Mr. JAIN (India): It was certainly not my intention to prolong or delay the conclusion of the work of the Commission. The representative of France stated that the list here contains documents which were formally submitted to the Disarmament Commission, and this is exactly the point which led to my suggestion, for we do not really think that the other documents that are not referred to here were submitted informally.

I would therefore propose, keeping in view your preference, Mr. Chairman, that we do not need to change the language of paragraph 15, or of any paragraphs up to paragraph 24, but that, after paragraph 24, we add one more paragraph before Part IV, the wording of which would read as follows:

"A number of other working papers dealing with substantive questions were also submitted by Member States in the Working Groups, which are referred to in the reports of the Working Groups."

It is a factual statement and the intent is to cover only what is not covered in the main report.

The CHAIRMAN: If I have understood our colleague from India correctly, I believe that we can add, after paragraph 24, an extra paragraph as read out by the representative of India - as a new paragraph 25, the remaining paragraphs in Part IV to be renumbered accordingly as paragraphs 26 to 31.

I suggest, therefore, that we leave paragraph 15 as it is and continue going through the document paragraph by paragraph.

If there are no comments on paragraphs 15 through 24, and on the new paragraph 25, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 15 to 25 were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: May I also take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the renumbered paragraphs 26 to 31 in Part IV?

Paragraphs 26 to 31 were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: Having adopted all paragraphs of the draft report, I should like to take up the draft report of the Commission as a whole, with all the reports of the subsidiary bodies inserted therein. May I take it that it is the wish of the Commission to adopt the draft report of the Commission as a whole, as contained in document A/CN.10/1992/CRP.2?

The draft report, as orally amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The Commission has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 8.

OTHER BUSINESS

The CHAIRMAN: It appears that no delegation has indicated a desire to make a statement under this item. May I take it, therefore, that the Commission has concluded its consideration of the item?

It was so decided.

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

The CHAIRMAN: As I mentioned earlier, thus far there are 14 names inscribed on the list of speakers wishing to make concluding statements. In order to make good use of the time available to the Commission this morning, we shall begin to hear the concluding statements now. If other delegations wish to speak, I urge them to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): It gives me great pleasure to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, the thanks and appreciation of my delegation, and my own, for the very efficient manner in which you have conducted our deliberations. I should also like to thank the members of the Secretariat for the most valuable assistance they provided to me as Chairman of Working Group I.

The 1992 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission is drawing to a close. I should therefore like to avail myself of this opportunity to make a few concluding remarks on behalf of my delegation.

The agenda and working methods of the Commission have, as we all know, recently been reviewed in order to make its work more effective. This year the Commission was to stand its first test under the new order, as it was requested by the General Assembly to conclude its deliberations on agenda item 4 in 1992. Many delegations, including my own, therefore attach particular importance to the outcome of the work of this agenda item.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The question of objective information on military matters deserves great attention on its own merits, as the provision of such information is conducive to confidence- and security-building and disarmament. The experiences of the process within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) are indeed very encouraging in this regard.

Sweden has over the years promoted the idea of provision of objective information on military matters also in the context of the United Nations, inter alia, by submitting draft resolutions on the standardized reporting of military expenditures. Furthermore, Sweden has participated in, and on some occasions chaired, expert panels on this matter and has, of course, participated in the reporting itself. My country has also, through United Nations studies and in many other ways, supported the efforts to create greater openness and transparency in military matters and the role of the United Nations in this context.

The successful outcome of this year's work on agenda item 4 has an added dimension in that it demonstrates that it is possible to reach consensus in this truly universal body on substantive guidelines in the field of arms limitation and disarmament and related issues. This bodes well for the future.

The results of the deliberations in Working Groups II, III and IV are also a source of satisfaction and should form a good basis for the conclusion of the respective agenda items.

Looking ahead, it seems useful to request the United Nations Diarmament Commission to elaborate general guidelines also in other areas where it is essential to seek broad political consensus, such as in the field of non-proliferation. It is necessary to initiate an international dialogue in this topical issue area, and the Disarmament Commission would be an appropriate forum for such a dialogue.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Some of the issues in the field of non-proliferation are certainly inherent in items which are already on the agenda of the Commission, but, in the view of my delegation, a comprehensive approach should be applied to this multi-faceted question. It needs to be discussed in depth and in all its aspects. This is why Sweden has proposed to inscribe the question of non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction, on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation is aware of the fact that another topic has also been proposed for inclusion in the agenda, and it would, therefore, be flexible as to the appropriate timing of including the new item proposed by Sweden. This matter is, of course, also related to the discussion about the number of items on the working agenda and the sequence of the initial, middle, or final stages of their consideration. However, in view of the urgent nature of the subject-matter, the decision to include the question of non-proliferation should be taken this year. The proposal has already been submitted at this session of the Disarmament Commission, in order to allow sufficient time for its consideration before a decision is to be taken this autumn. My delegation will be available for further consultations on this matter.

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, I should like to express the warm thanks of my delegation to those who have already supported our proposal.

Mr. ARAUJO CASTRO (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, I think it is fair to say that the Disarmament Commission is concluding the work of its 1992 substantive session, under your guidance and leadership, amidst a general feeling of justifiable satisfaction.

We have successfully finalized the set of "Guidelines and recommendations for provision of objective information on military matters", in the framework of the new working methods outlined in the annex to General Assembly

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

resolution 44/119 C, on "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission". We have thus concluded the first substantive item on the working agenda of the Disarmament Commission for in-depth consideration for a period of three years. It proved to be a very successful test case. All delegations displayed a very constructive and flexible attitude, a fact that reflects the new atmosphere prevailing in this Commission. A special word of appreciation is in order for Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden, the dedicated Chairman of Working Group I, whose skill and untiring leadership were instrumental to the successful outcome of these endeavours, which built upon the groundwork which had been set forth in the two previous years by Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria and by you, Mr. Chairman.

In Working Group II, there was a constructive and useful continuation of exchange of views on the "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons". Although differences of perception on the subject still persist, the quickly evolving international scene provided the backdrop for a renewed exercise of collective reflection on the possible directions and pace of the process of nuclear disarmament. In this regard, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to Ambassador Prakash Shah of India, for the wise and even-handed manner in which he conducted the deliberations and for the valuable outline presented in the annex to the report of Working Group II, which will greatly help us in our future deliberations.

In Working Group III, significant progress was equally registered in the course of our deliberations this year, and a special word of recognition is in order for Ambassador Ricardo Luna of Peru, for the very pragmatic and skilful way in which he advanced the discussions on "Regional approach to disarmament

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

within the context of global security". The contents of the report of the Group will surely assist us in making further progress on this important item at our next session.

Finally, I should like to express my delegation's satisfaction at the important progress made by Working Group IV this year in its deliberations on "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields", and with the constructive atmosphere in which discussions continued to be carried out. We are greatly indebted to Ambassador Azikiwe of Nigeria, for having agreed to be Chairman of this Working Group, which is in its second year of fulfilling a complex, wide-ranging and challenging mandate, encompassing matters that had never before been dealt with in a systematic debate in the United Nations. We also wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the very constructive role played by Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada, as a friend of the Chair, in performing the challenging task of putting together the draft report on this year's deliberations.

By adopting for the second year a substantive report on its work, Working Group IV has demonstrated the seriousness with which it is approaching the complex task of building consensus on this important agenda item. The cautious step-by-step approach followed by the Working Group throughout the two initial years of deliberations has already resulted in a few important consensual principles contained in this year's report, which will serve as foundations for further recommendations to be finalized next year, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/38 D.

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

On sub-item I, on the question of "Scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security", there was agreement on a number of aspects: it was generally recognized that international security as such depends on a multiplicity of factors in the social, economic, environmental as well as the military field; there was a consensus that science and technology per se were deemed to be neutral and their application for peaceful purposes should be promoted; and it was agreed that the application of science and technology for legitimate defence purposes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and generally agreed principles of international law was acceptable.

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

On the sub-item on science and technology for disarmament, progress was made in identifying areas in which science and technology can be usefully applied for such disarmament tasks as weapons disposal, conversion and verification. There was consensus that international cooperation in this regard needed to be strengthened, that access to disarmament-related technologies was of particular relevance, and that efforts should be increased to develop concrete recommendations.

On sub-item 3, on the role of science and technology in other related fields, it was pointed out that a number of conclusions and recommendations contained in the study entitled "Charting potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment" might be relevant to the Group's work. The question of the utilization of scientific and technological resources currently applied to military purposes for the promotion of economic and social development was also addressed.

On sub-item 4, on the transfer of high technology with military applications, the Working Group continued its consideration of the proposal presented last year by Argentina and Brazil for seeking universally acceptable international norms or guidelines that would regulate international transfers of senstitive technologies. In this respect, there was consensus in the Group on two very important points: first, "the need to widen multilateral dialogue was recognized"; and, secondly, it was agreed that:

> "norms or guidelines for the transfer of high technology ... should take into account the legitimate requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that they do not deny access to high technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes" (A/CN.10/1992, CRP.6, para. 8).

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

Moreover, a number of relevant observations made by delegations was collected by the Chairman, on his own initiative, concerning the objectives of such a multilateral dialogue; the objectives of export control measures taken by some supplier States; the relationship between the multilateral dialogue and existing arrangements; the question of the legitimacy of partial regimes and universal regimes; the question of universally acceptable norms or guidelines that would regulate transfers of sensitive technology in order to seek the adherence of the greatest possible number of States both on the side of supply and on that of demand; the stake of all States in the strengthening of international peace and security as well as in facilitating legitimate international exchanges in the field of high technology, thus positively affecting international trade and economic and social development; the need for improved modalities to guarantee the transfer and utilization of dual-use technology exclusively for peaceful or legitimate defense purposes; and, finally, the improvement or development of mechanisms for international cooperation, on a bilateral, regional or multilateral basis.

Working Group IV expressed interest in continuing to make progress on this sub-item by further focusing the work at the 1993 session of the Disarmament Commission. Taking as a basis the above-mentioned elements and others contained in relevant documents submitted by delegations, it is our hope that the Working Group will be able successfully to proceed with the multilateral dialogue on this subject and finalize the elaboration of a set of guidelines on the international transfer of sensitive technologies. Brazil looks forward to participating in a constructive manner in the further deliberations of the Commission on this and other subjects.

(Mr. Araujo Castro, Brazil)

Finally, we should like to express our recognition of the skill and the qualities of leadership with which you, Ambassador Erdös, have conducted the work of the Disarmament Commission at its 1992 substantive session.

Mr. MORRIS (Australia): A few years ago, Australia joined with a number of other concerned delegations to press for change in the way the Disarmament Commission operated. At that time, it was clear that fundamental changes were under way in the international security environment. It was clear that the Disarmament Commission was preoccupied with an outmoded agenda and drowning itself in sterile debate. It was clear that the Disarmament Commission was fast becoming irrelevant in a changing world.

Australia was grateful for the response to our call for change and we welcomed the reform package which subsequently was agreed. With this package, we were able "to report out" items which had been debated for years without resolution, and we were able to settle on a shorter, four-item agenda more attuned to the concerns of the day.

Three years on, it seems useful to consider whether the Disarmament Commission really is now more in tune with the "real" world outside these walls; to consider whether our work methods are the most appropriate to fulfil the tasks we have set ourselves; and to consider what additional changes, if any, might be necessary to ensure that the Commission functions in the most effective way poassible. I propose to do this in two ways: first by looking at our work practices, and then by considering the substance of our agenda.

Under our new procedures, items on our agenda are given a maximum "shelf life" of three years. Of course, it was originally intended that if items could be concluded earlier than the three years it would be so much the better. The reality, however, seems to be that all items will run their three-year maximum term. This creates some management problems.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

We have now reported out one of our four original items and, under current arrangements, next year we should expect to conclude our consideration of the other three. Given the amount of time required this year to conclude our consideration of the objective information item, it has to be asked whether it will be practical, let alone possible, for similar time and resources to be allocated next year to three items, not to forget that there is also an expectation that we should begin consideration of a new item to replace objective information.

Last week, Sir, you outlined possible ways of approaching this problem. We will reflect carefully on your suggestions on ways to resolve our difficulties, and we will look forward to participating in a more formal exchange on the issue later in the year. In the meantime, as we all try to think through the problem, it might serve us all well to recall that, when we agreed to restrict our new agenda to no more than four items, we did not set a minimum number for consideration. Perhaps we should be thinking in terms of a three-point agenda to narrow our focus and to ensure a more concentrated and effective pattern of work.

We should also think about the reporting out of items. I have expressed concern about the prospect of reporting out three items at one session. Perhaps we should think about staggering the conclusion of items. This would require some adjustments to currently agreed arrangements. For example, next year one item might be set aside for a year, so that only two items need to be reported out. Repeating this process for a further year would then ensure a regular pattern of reporting out only one item thereafter each year. These thoughts we offer only to stimulate thinking, and we will continue to reflect on this ourselves.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

I should now like to focus on the work pattern of the Working Groups. Assuming that each Group will proceed on a three-year cycle, it seems sensible to consider how best to make this work, particularly now that we have had some practical experience with the process and have established some standards against which we can measure both positive and negative aspects of our work to date.

Clearly, while each Working Group will have a pace and dynamic of its own, and prospects for easily reaching consensus or otherwise will be directly related to the difficulty, complexity or contentiousness of the particular item, we do believe that there are characteristics common to the work of all Working Groups. For any Group, the first year's work clearly should be one for a wide-ranging exchange of views, circulation of working papers and other national contributions. The overriding objective should be to ensure that all views and all relevant information is placed on the table, as it were.

For this to be done purposefully and effectively, it will be essential for agreement quickly to be reached on a framework for the discussion. Indeed, this framework will be of critical importance to the work to be done in the following years, not least because it should have a determining influence on the structure of the Disarmament Commission's final report on the item.

Last year, Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia provided an excellent example of how the process I have outlined could be put into practice. He put considerable effort into pre-Disarmament Commission consultations to establish parameters for agreement for a framework. This helped facilitate speedy agreement on a framework once the Disarmament Commission had begun its formal sessions.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

His report as Chairman too was something of a model for future groups. Time prevented any rationalizing or reordering of the points he drew from the general debate or that were provided to him by delegations, but we think that was a task more appropriate to be handled by the successor Chairman. In any event, capitals need time to absorb and respond to new ideas and issues, and we see this as being provided in the period between sessions of the Commission. This underlines the importance of ensuring, to the extent possible, that national positions are spelled out with maximum clarity during the first year's debate.

That is not to suggest that the second-year Chairman should simply pick up where his or her predecessor left off. That would be intellectually remiss. We elect our Chairmen for the contribution we believe they can make to facilitate our progress. And as far as my delegation is concerned, this means we expect an incoming Chairman - while respecting the structure and any common understandings agreed the previous year - to be prepared to take risks and, where he or she judges appropriate, to reformulate contributions from the previous year in terms he or she judges might help bridge differing positions. Our Chairman should be proactive, and with the able assistance of the Secretariat should be prepared to generate as many working papers as is necessary to stimulate and facilitate the work of the groups. Otherwise we would inevitably find ourselves spending the session reinventing phrases and formulations of the previous year. Inevitably we would become bogged down in unproductive work-games. Inevitably we would risk losing the year.

What we should aim for at the end of Year Two, and what our Chairman should focus his or her efforts on, is a substantive text containing as much agreed language as possible and producing as solid a basis as possible for the

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

final year's work. Our Chairman must be prepared to bring energy and commitment to the task.

Ambassador Hyltenius has provided us with a role model for the "reporting-out" year; I hardly need to say more on this.

None the less, when we come to the third and final year we should in particular keep in mind what is the role and function of the Disarmament Commission. The Disarmament Commission is a deliberative body the function of which is to consider and make recommendations on disarmament issues of particular concern to the international community. In so far as is possible, it is enjoined to adopt by consensus substantive decisions or recommendations.

That injunction to seek consensus sometimes puts us in difficult positions because of the widely varying views of countries on a number of the priority disarmament issues. We accept, however, because logic and common sense dictate it, that in a deliberative body such as the Disarmament Commission recommendations that do not enjoy consensus will be of little value since there will be no universal willingness to implement them. It is in this particular respect that the Disarmament Commission differs from, for example, the First Committee of the General Assembly, where it is quite natural, if consensus cannot be found, to take votes on draft resolutions, all of which usually contain recommendations.

I am focusing on the declaratory nature of the First Committee versus the deliberative nature of the Disarmament Commission because that difference is very important. If it did not exist there would be no reason to duplicate, in the United Nations, the work of the First Committee.

Another equally important point is that if the Disarmament Commission is qualitatively different from the First Committee in that its single goal is

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

consensus recommendations, then we should work in it in a manner which is oriented towards effectively fulfilling that objective.

That brings me back to where I began. Reform of the Disarmament Commission will succeed only if we, the members of the Commission, allow it to do so. National positions cannot be forcefully altered, and divergencies of view must be respected. But looking back over this year's work I think that greater effort than was at times applied during this session must be made at future sessions to bridge differences. We must focus on the possible rather than emphasizing the impossible, and we must continually look to keeping our efforts in tune with the world outside, casting off the dogma of years past.

I turn now to the substance of this year's agenda.

In Working Group I, on objective information, the achievement of a consensus text on guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters is a landmark for the Disarmament Commission. It shows that concrete results are possible in this forum and should contribute to an enhanced atmosphere for multilateral disarmament negotiations more generally in the future.

The adoption of that document is also another important step in the process of increasing transparency in military matters, which will contribute significantly to confidence-building and international security generally. Australia is particularly pleased with the references in the text to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The further development of the Register is recommended in this document.

With respect to Working Group II, this has been a momentous 12 months in the process of nuclear disarmament. Not least, we have seen the reductions in nuclear weapons announced by the Russian Federation and the United States, and the moratoriums by the Russian Federation and France on nuclear tests.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

Clearly we are now seeing tangible steps, albeit tentative ones, towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, and we are heartened by this.

These developments were reviewed favourably under item 2 of the Working Group's agenda, and represented one of the areas where there was convergence of thinking. We were pleased that the Working Group was able quickly to agree on the structure of its work and its report, and in doing so building on our suggested structure last year and taking this item an additional step forward this year. Given the divergence of views on the nuclear issue, we congratulate Ambassador Shah on this achievement.

None the less, it is disappointing that the nuclear item could not progress much further from its general-debate mode. Undoubtedly, this is a reflection of the concerns of the international community about the possession and possible proliferation of nuclear weapons. If we are to be in a position meaningfully "to report out" this item, it will not be helpful for States to cling to cold-war rhetoric. We must try harder to develop new language which will build on and reinforce the positive steps which have been taken in recent years.

With respect to Working Group III on regional disarmament, I cannot conceal the disappointment of my delegation at the relative lack of progress in this Working Group this year. After such a promising beginning last year, by any measure this year's progress has been modest to say the least. The issue of regional disarmament is too important to my delegation - indeed to all of us - to deserve such handling.

But rather than focus on what was not achieved I prefer to look forward to see how the situation can be retrieved next year, when we are due to finalize our consideration of the item.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

We have a sound structure for the item, developed last year. Most if not all of the issues involved are to be found, albeit in unpolished form, in last year's paper, and a few additional points have emerged from our discussions this year.

The challenge for next year, then, is to see how all of this can be assembled in consensus language and in a form that will promote positively the concept and reality of regional disarmament. If we had the time, we could pick up where we left off this year, but we do not. Clearly, this will be one item in particular that will benefit from some advance work by the Chairman-elect. My delegation will be pleased to work with him or her to help ensure that rapid progress can be made on the item and a successful outcome assured.

Last year when we reviewed the outcome of the work of Working Group IV, on science and technology, we felt that its report would be a good basis on which to proceed this year. This optimism was confirmed when the Working Group was able quickly to reach agreement to use the four sub-items suggested last year as the basis for the Group's deliberations and eventual report.

The papers presented last year and this year have given next year's Working Group a solid basis from which "to report out" this item.

We are particularly grateful to Abassador Mason of Canada for agreeing to assist the Chairman in stitching together the principles in this year's report. This was not an easy task given the unexpected debate which developed at the drafting stage, particularly on issues which received little attention during the substantive meetings.

(Mr. Morris, Australia)

The second year of the newly functioning Disarmament Commission is now all but behind us. It is a session that has been marked with disappointments, with some encouraging results, and crowned with one particular success, thanks to the efforts of Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden.

My statement today has focused mainly on structure and institutional arrangements for the Disarmament Commission. When we adopted the reform package for this body, all of us were unsure whether the reality would measure up to our hopes. Certainly my delegation believes that the Disarmament Commission has now been set on a more productive and relevant path than hitherto. Certainly we believe that its more focused and compact agenda is now much more in tune with the world today. But we do see room for further refinements and further changes in our work habits.

Last year I observed that some delegations appeared to be having difficulties in shrugging off, as I said, "old think", and continued to work in ways inconsistent with the great changes under way in the international climate. This year the "internal climate", if it can so be characterized, has been far more positive, and we welcome this.

The Disarmament Commission is now beginning to show a potential we had thought was all but lost. But much remains to be done. Our work habits need to be kept under continued review and we need constantly to ensure that we do not allow the "new look" Disarmament Commission to revert to an ivory tower of babble.

Finally, may I extend the thanks of my delegation to you, Mr. Chairman, to the officers of the Commission, and not least to the members of the Secretariat, for helping us to make the progress that we did this year.

Mr. COOK (New Zealand): I should like to offer some brief comments about this year's meeting and about the future work programme of the Commission. Before doing so, may I first extend to you, Mr. Chairman, my congratulations on the able way in which you have overseen our discussions of the past weeks.

New Zealand was among those counries that strongly supported measures to streamline the Disarmament Commission's agenda. We believe that reducing the number of topics considered by the Commission and setting a fixed time-frame for their discussion would contribute to the effectiveness of this body. It seems an appropriate point in the cycle of items to take stock of any lessons that can be drawn from our experience so far of how these changes have operated in practice.

This year's session has rightly focused particular attention on the item on objective information, which is the first item on our new agenda to be taken to completion. I should at the outset acknowledge the debt of gratitude I feel we all owe to the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador Hyltenius, for his tireless and constructive efforts to steer us towards the completion of a consensus report.

The objective for my delegation on this item was the completion of a report which gave general endorsement to the important principle of greater openness and transparency on military matters and which set out some realistic guidelines to this end. We are sure that the final report, while of course it contains a number of compromises, none the less constitutes a valuable contribution to efforts to promote the provision of objective information on military matters.

(Mr. Cook, New Zealand)

While this exercise was not an easy one, we consider that the final outcome underlines the role the Disarmament Commission can play in promoting practical and concrete disarmament and confidence-building measures. I think our experience in Working Group I also underlines the need for the Commission to concentrate its efforts on specific proposals which are likely to attract consensus.

It is clear that issues which have caused difficulty for delegations in other forums are unlikely to be resolved in the course of the Disarmament Commission's session. It is also important, I suggest, that our recommendations should, as far as possible, be forward-looking and should contain realistic ideas that can be taken further by Member States, either bilaterally or multilaterally.

Working Group II dealt with an issue of particular concern to my delegaton. We found the wide-ranging exchange of views on various aspects of nuclear disarmament to be valuable and stimulating. There was general recognition of the historic changes that have taken place since our meeting a year ago, both in terms of specific arms control measures and, perhaps even more importantly, the new international climate now prevailing. At the same time, not unexpectedly, it was clear that on some issues we are a long way from consensus.

We are pleased that, despite these clear differences of view, the debate remained constructive. We therefore consider that the report prepared by Ambassador Shah provides a valuable summary of the issues raised and sets out in a helpful way the agreed structures for future work.

(Mr. Cook, New Zealand)

Looking ahead, my delegation considers that it will be essential to focus future work particularly on those aspects where a measure of agreement can be found. My delegation has made some specific suggestions for building on existing material, such as the nuclear-weapons study, and we hope these ideas will be of help in future consideration of this item.

In Working Group III some progress was made in identifying general propositions applying to the field of regional disarmament. The revised Chairman's paper (A/CN.10/1992/WG.III/CRP.3/Rev.1) annexed to the report incorporates both formulations that evolved in the course of discussions and some proposals that were raised but not discussed in any detail. Clearly, we still have some way to go before we arrive at an agreed text. Next year, while completing a reading of the remaining sections of the Chairman's text, we will also have to review the overall structure of the document we are seeking to produce.

Turning to the work of Working Group IV this year a number of thought-provoking working papers on science and tehnology were presented. The content of these papers demonstrate the vast array of issues that this item encompasses. We are particularly pleased to see the growing recognition which is reflected in this year's report of the Working Group of the important contribution that science and technology can make in the field of disarmament. The ongoing dialogue on the transfer of high technology with military applications has been useful in identifying the range of different views on this subject.

In conclusion, I should say that New Zealand will be studying carefully the suggestions that have been advanced for a further rationalization of our

(Mr. Cook, New Zealand)

future work programme. We have taken on board the argument that on the basis of this year's experience it would be an immensely difficult undertaking to attempt to bring three full items to a final conclusion in the same year. We are therefore attracted to the idea that our schedule should be adjusted to enable the Commission's workload to be spread more evenly so that each item can be given the attention it requires. We look forward to exploring these options in more detail with other delegations before a decision is taken on our future work programme later this year.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.